THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) One representation from Andhra Pradesh-North National Association of Fishermen has been received during 1998 for construction of houses for fishermen in three villages of West Godavari District.

(c) and (d) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been directed, vide letter dated 20th May, 1998, to look into the matter and send their comments at the earliest. The comments of the State Government are still awaited.

(e) and (f) The scheme provides for construction of houses for fishermen at a cost not exceeding Rs. 35,000/- per house. The maximum plinth area for a house prescribed under the scheme is 35 sq, metre, the type of houses to be built, within the above parameters, has been left entirely to the discretion of the State Governments. The Central Government renders assistance, whether technical or otherwise, to the State Governments in formulation of proposals for construction of houses under the scheme as and when required.

Schemes for Soil and Water conservation in Maharashtra

1671. DR. SHRIKANT RAMA-CHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the latest schemes for soil and water conservation as applicable to the farmers of Maharashtra;

(b) what has been the response to these schemes; and

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(c) what steps will be taken to make these schemes more popular?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Government of India is implementing the following Schemes:

(i) Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects (ii) Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Watershed Development Programme for Rainfed Areas and (iii) Watershed Development Programme (Indo-Gcrman) in the State of Maharashtra (iv) Western Ghat Development Programme and (v) Drought Prone Area Programmes.

Besides, the Government of Maharashtra is also implementing a scheme called Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWDP) under the State plan. All these scheme are largely addressed to the problem of Soil and Water Conservation in the State, the farmers' response to these Schemes is quite satisfactory and encouraging.

(c) Following steps are being taken to make them farmer—oriented in the State : (i) providing suitable institutional arrangements for promoting people's participation; (ii) considerable emphasis on capacity building the human resource development by way of organising need based orientation and training; (iii) Involvement of the watershed community in management of created assets under the projects.

Assistance to Cooperatives of Weaker Sactions

1672. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provide assitance to cooperatives of weaker section in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of such cooperatives in Maharashtra which were given such assistance during the last three years, year-wise and society wise;

(d) the results achieved therefrom; and

(e) the steps being taken to further strengthen cooperatives of weaker section in the country particularly in Maharashtra?